

St John the Baptist, Hove

Parish Profile 2025



“Discovering and sharing the love of God.”

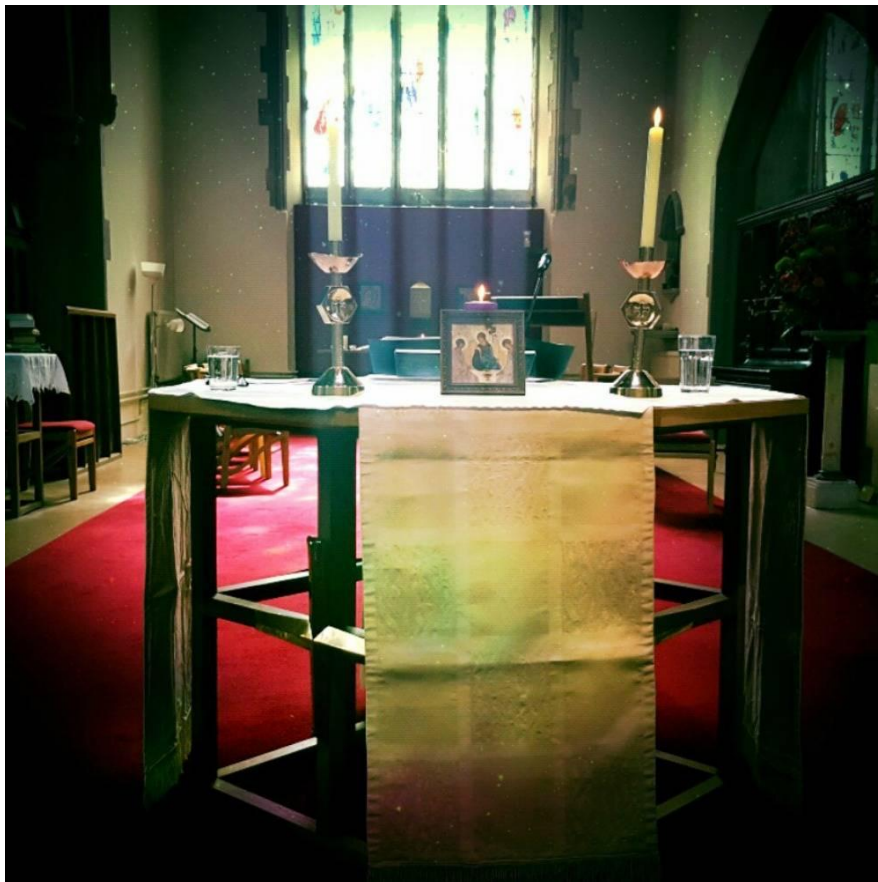
1. Welcome

Welcome to St John the Baptist — an inclusive, welcoming and visible presence in the heart of Hove. We are seeking a Vicar who will work alongside us to strengthen our ministry in our local community.

We are known for our friendly, inclusive and welcoming Church, our pastoral care, and accessible worship rooted in Anglican tradition. Our small congregation is deeply committed, but we are aware of our vulnerability in numbers and see this as a call to action — to reach out more effectively, raise our profile, and connect with the many people who pass our doors daily.

2. Our Vision

We aim to grow our congregation, strengthen our identity, and improve our visibility in Hove. We want to be known as a welcoming place of worship that listens – to God, to the wider Parish, and each other - and a hub for the community. The Eucharist is central to our life together, but we are open to exploring new ways of worship that are inclusive, participatory, and welcoming to all — especially those unfamiliar with church. We value the ministry of women and LGBTQ+ people, and actively embrace diversity in all forms.



3. The Vicar We Seek

We are looking for a Vicar with warmth, humour, and openness; someone who is a clear communicator, a good listener, and able to set healthy boundaries. The right person will be at ease in both formal and informal worship, confident in leading occasional offices (baptisms, weddings, funerals), and able to relate to the diverse and eclectic community of Brighton and Hove.

We hope for someone who will work collaboratively, encourage lay ministry, and have the creativity and energy to develop new outreach opportunities. An understanding of the challenges faced by a small congregation and the skills to help us grow are essential.

4. The Parish

Our parish is compact, busy, and densely populated. Centred on Palmeira Square and Adelaide Crescent, it combines Regency elegance with a diverse population. While the area appears affluent, there are pockets of social challenge, including loneliness, homelessness, and addiction.

According to the 2021 Census, around 7,000 people live in the parish. There is a higher-than-average number of professionals and elderly residents, and relatively few children. One of the challenges we face is not just a declining congregation but also an aging one that has increasingly high needs. The lack of a church school in the parish means that we find it difficult to attract and keep young families. Our location, close to the seafront and city centre, does mean hundreds of people pass by daily — a significant opportunity for engagement.

5. Our Community Links

The Hop50+ Centre is a thriving hub for older residents, offering activities, classes, and a welcoming café. Many of our congregation volunteer there, deepening our ties with the local community.

The Cornerstone Community Centre hosts over 60 groups each week, serving around 1,500 people. It includes meeting rooms, event spaces, and a children's centre. The PCC is represented on its management board, ensuring close collaboration.

6. Worship

The Sunday Eucharist is our principal service, with an average attendance on a Sunday of 34, which we seek to increase as a priority. We value accessible liturgy and a welcoming atmosphere. We seek to challenge, inspire and guide with our Worship. Our music is led by organists playing our historic J.W. Walker organ, and congregational singing is strong despite the absence of a formal choir. We also

hold weekly Compline and Morning Prayer and we are open to introducing new service styles to engage those less familiar with church, to help deliver our vision of spreading the Word of God in Hove.



7. Pastoral Care and Outreach

Pastoral care is one of our great strengths, offered by both clergy and lay members. We support those facing isolation, illness, or other challenges, and aim to be a place where people find comfort and hope.

We also take part in civic and community events, from the Christmas Carol Service and supporting the Mayoral Tree-lighting, to Swedish Church services and History Talks in the Church. These occasions help us maintain visibility in, and connection to, the local area.

8. Safeguarding

We take safeguarding seriously. Policies are reviewed annually, and regular training is undertaken by clergy, PCC members, and our volunteers. Our approach covers both children and vulnerable adults, reflecting the realities of our parish.

9. Finances

Our finances are managed carefully, and we run a balanced budget with reserves held. We participate in the Parish Giving Scheme to sustain our ministry and work to balance the costs of maintaining our historic building with our Parish Ministry Costs. Whilst our most recent Quinquennial report had no major issues, we have

had to conduct works with some notable costs this past year. We are unfortunately unable to meet our whole Parish Share at present but have been able to increase it over the past few years and will seek to continue increasing it whenever feasible. While resources are limited, we are committed to using them wisely in service of our mission.

10. The Vicarage

Our modern four-storey vicarage, built in 1999, is a short walk from the church and the sea. It includes four bedrooms (two ensuite), a family bathroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen (recently updated), and utility room. There is a garden, garage, and secure parking.

11. Conclusion

We are a committed, welcoming community, ready to work with a new Vicar to deepen our faith, grow our congregation, and strengthen our presence in Hove. We believe the right leader will help us harness our location, partnerships, and strengths to share the love of God more widely.

